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WSAG

23 APR 75

(DCI copy)

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23 April 1975

DCI BRIEFING FOR
23 APRIL WSAG MEETING

VIETNAM

- I. The Communists today promptly rejected the new South Vietnamese call for unconditional negotiations to reach a cease-fire and establish a National Council of Reconciliation and Concord.
 - A. In dismissing Saigon's offer, Hanoi and the PRG repeated yesterday's demands for an entirely new South Vietnamese government and the immediate withdrawal of the American presence. Their public statements continue to have harsh anti-American overtones.
 - B. Both Chinese and Soviet media have now picked up Hanoi's line that the resignation of Thieu, by itself, is not enough to get talks started.
 - C. At the same time, however, we are beginning to pick up some tentative indications of ambiguity in Peking's position on Indochina.
 1. The Chinese lately have been stressing the importance of the Paris Agreement

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and the role of the PRG -- themes Hanoi has been downplaying.

2. Behind this appears to lie the longstanding Chinese suspicion that Hanoi -- and indirectly the Soviets -- will be able to sharply increase their influence in the region following a complete North Vietnamese takeover in the South.

II. There was little progress yesterday in forming a new government in Saigon that might meet Communist specifications.

- A. On the morning of April 23, Prime Minister Can submitted his resignation and that of his cabinet to the new president, ^{Huong}~~Huong~~ -- who in turn asked them to stay in office for a few days, until a new government can be formed.
- B. Four principal oppositionists -- Father Thanh, General "Big" Minh, former senate chairman Nguyen Van Huyen and senator Vu Van Mau -- met to prepare a joint statement demanding that President Huong ~~[stop aside and]~~ allow a new cabinet to take charge, negotiate with the Communists, and "stabilize the situation."

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C. There is now some question as to whether Vu Van Mau, and the An Quang Buddhists elements he represents, will endorse the statement which had been scheduled for release today.

1. Such a display of typical South Vietnamese opposition disunity would probably only further delay the formation of a government with some chance of dealing with the Communists.

III. The lull in the ground fighting ^{*in most areas*} continued yesterday.

- A. Defense Minister Tran Van Don has ordered ARVN forces to adopt defensive tactics instead of attacking.
- B. The Communists appear to be repositioning their troops for future action.
 1. There is a report that the Communists are having some local logistics problems, but given the vast amounts of supplies they

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have moved into Military Region 3, such problems are not likely to impede future Communist action. Indeed, the same report indicated that major attacks in the capital area were to begin during the 21-25 April period.

C. There have been only a few developments in the military situation.

1. East of Saigon, Bien Hoa airbase was again shelled, but there was no ground action in the area.

2. *Northwest of the capital, heavy fighting has again erupted as the NVA attempts to close Route 22 south of Tay Ninh City.*
 32. A potentially explosive situation exists at Vung Tau, where a large influx of refugees has crowded into the town in the past few days, and civil disorder threatens to break out soon.

a. The government hopes to move many of the refugees in the town to the delta, *additional refugees will be steered away from Vung Tau.* and new arrivals will be sent there directly.

47. In the northern delta, the Communists continued to probe government positions.

52. Closer to the capital, three or four transport aircraft flying into and out of Tan

Son Nhut have been fired at from the ground, in most cases with small arms only. A US jet transport involved in the evacuation may have been the target of a shoulder launched SA-7 missile yesterday.

a. Our evidence on this is not conclusive, and is based on visual sightings by ground personnel at Tan Son Nhut of an object which may have been an SA-7 missile approaching a C-141 aircraft at approximately 10,000 feet altitude.

IV. In Cambodia, initial statements from Khmer Communist deputy prime minister Khieu Samphan and from information minister Hu Nimm have stressed that Cambodia will be a "neutral and non-aligned state."

A. At the same time, however, their statements have omitted any call for reconciliation with, or amnesty for, those who fought or served on the side of the former government.

1. This omission was probably deliberate since we have good evidence that the Com-

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munists are moving ruthlessly against former government officials and military officers. They have instructed their cadres "secretly to eliminate all senior enemy commanders and those who owe us a blood debt."

2. So far, there is no evidence of mass reprisals against the civilian population.

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